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REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and reexamination of this application are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 2-3 have been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended. New claims 4 – 12 are added, and are fully supported in the original specification. Claims 1, and 4 – 12 are pending.

Claims 1-3 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Yoshida et al. (US 6,786,505) in view of Cundill et al. (US 5,704,639). Claim 1 has been amended to recite structure not included in either Yoshida et al. (US 6,786,505) or Cundill et al. (US 5,704,639) either alone or in combination. Yoshida teaches a primary airbag “for holding shoulders and a chest of an adult passenger when it is deployed *which flows directly into* a secondary airbag through holes 33 which “hold[s] a head of the adult passenger” (see Yoshida abstract and Fig. 1). Claim 1 requires:

a gas flow path communicating at a first end with a second end of the first airbag and at a second end with a second airbag; and

a gas flow path temporarily closing portion disposed in an intermediate portion of the gas flow path for temporarily closing the gas flow path, the gas flow path temporarily closing portion being broken under internal pressure of the first airbag, when the internal pressure reaches a predetermined value, allowing gas within the first airbag to flow through the gas flow path into the second airbag.

Cundill does not remedy the deficiencies of Yoshida. Rather, Cundill teaches an airbag venting mechanism on an airbag which releases the gas from the airbag into the vehicle interior, thereby deflating an airbag after deployment. Claim 1 is nonobvious over the references.

New claims 4-12 depend from claim 1, and are patentable over the references cited for at least the same reasons with respect to claim 1, and need not be separately distinguished. Applicants, however, reserve the right to submit additional arguments as to any of the claims 4-12 at a later date.

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Claims 1-3 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Bauer (US 5,496,059) in view of Cundill. Claim 1 has been amended to recite structure not included in either Bauer (US 5,496,059) or Cundill et al. (US 5,704,639) either alone or in combination. Bauer teaches a tube that inflates thereby driving a sharp ridge 52 through a severing layer 16 (see Bauer Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). High pressure gas merely fills this dead-ended tube. The tube of Bauer does not include a flow path to a second airbag, nor an intermediate portion which breaks when the internal pressure reaches a predetermined value, thereby causing inflation of a second airbag. Claim 1 requires:

a gas flow path communicating at a first end with a second end of the first airbag and at a second end with a second airbag; and

a gas flow path temporarily closing portion disposed in an intermediate portion of the gas flow path for temporarily closing the gas flow path, the gas flow path temporarily closing portion being broken under internal pressure of the first airbag, when the internal pressure reaches a predetermined value, allowing gas within the first airbag to flow through the gas flow path into the second airbag.

Cundill does not remedy the deficiencies of Bauer. Rather, Cundill teaches an airbag venting mechanism on an airbag which releases the gas from the airbag into the vehicle interior, thereby deflating an airbag after deployment. Claim 1 is nonobvious over the references.

New claims 4-12 depend from claim 1, and are patentable over the references cited for at least the same reasons with respect to claim 1, and need not be separately distinguished. Applicants, however, reserve the right to submit additional arguments as to any of the claims 4-12 at a later date.

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In view of the above, early issuance of a notice of allowance is solicited. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Curtis B. Hamre, Reg. 29,165, at (612)455-3802.



Oct. 21
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Respectfully submitted,

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By:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curtis B. Hamre".

Curtis B. Hamre
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CBH/lad